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1948

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P. 5. 70

6 MAY 1948

Registry Number	E5776/1360/31
FROM	Foreign Office Minute
No.	Mr J.S.BEITH
Dated	3.5.48.
Received in Registry	5.5.48.

Communications from Jerusalem

Records meeting which was held in the Foreign Office on April 29th, at which Mr Lewis Jones and Mr MacIntyre of the U.S. Embassy were present together with Mr Price, Mr Thomas and Mr Spinney, attaches letter to Colonial Office containing draft of telegram to Jerusalem.

Last Paper

5775

References

(Print)

(How disposed of)

(Action completed)

(Index)

Next Paper

5848

(Minutes.)

Attlee tel. as sent by CO.

JB May 6

See within copy; telegram to Palestine 820 by 4

JB May 10

~~See within~~:

Tel. Palestine — C.O. 1287 of May 7.

General Dept. (Mr Spinney)

You recall that we spoke to News Dept. About the pernicious D.T. article

JB May 12

Yes. I informed Mr. Townshend (G.P.O.) of the action taken; he will no doubt mention it informally to Cable & Wireless

22/5

JB May 25

34967

Registry No.

70

Top Secret.
Secret.
Confidential.
Restricted.
Open.

Draft. TELEGRAM

To:
High Commissioner,
Jerusalem.

From:
Colonial Office.

New Supt. agree
JB May 3

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(13555) Wt. 43698—114 200m 2/47 G.S.St. Gp. 620

Telegram PR/71975 [redacted] from C. in C. Middle East to the War Office dated April 29th states that after Cable and Wireless move to Transjordan on May 6th no army apparatus will be available for the sole use of press messages, but that one SCR 399 wireless set will be at the disposal "of civil in Jerusalem for civil emergency" and that a similar set has been installed in the military compound at Haifa.

2. We understand that local correspondents are making arrangements to serve whatever transmitting facilities may be [redacted] available to them and this seems to be a reasonable arrangement. Diplomatic wireless set to be used by the Consulate will not be available for press messages and we shall be glad if you will do your best in co-operation with the military authorities to enable correspondents to continue sending their messages. It is important that American correspondents should be allowed to share any facilities ~~granted~~ arranged for British correspondents/

correspondents and we understand that this is being done.

3. Please inform Beaumont for his guidance. We recognise that position will be extremely difficult but hope that a news black out can be avoided.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

Minutes.

F. 5. /C

71

Communications from Jerusalem

MAY 1948

A meeting was held in my room in the Foreign Office on April 29th at which the following were present: Mr. Lewis Jones and Mr. MacIntyre of the American Embassy, Mr. Price of the News Department, Mr. Thomas of the Communications Department and Mr. Spinney of the General Department.

We dealt first with the question of official communications from Jerusalem. Mr. Thomas explained briefly what we were doing in the way of a diplomatic wireless installation and we made it clear to the representatives of the American Embassy that this link would not be available for press messages in the same way as the Embassy suggested that their Consulate set might be. The difficulties were, briefly, the fact that a flood of press messages always coincided with a period of stress when the official link was crowded out by Government traffic and the problem of distributing "pooled messages" at the other end.

Passing on to the question of separate facilities for press and broadcasting, we made it clear to the American Embassy that we wanted to do our best to help within the limits of the equipment and manpower available in Jerusalem. I explained that there was no question of Cable and Wireless representatives remaining on in Jerusalem after May 6th (the date of their departure having been extended by about a week). There seemed however to be a good chance that the local correspondents would make their own arrangements about staffing transmitters and that our military authorities would be able to help them out over equipment.

Since this meeting Mr. Price has been in close touch with Brigadier Cross of the War Office Public Relations Department, who has now produced the attached message from the C. in C. Middle East. This message is rather vague and I think we should now get the Colonial Office to send a telegram to Jerusalem on the lines of the attached draft.

I am sending copies of this minute and the draft to Mr. Mathieson and Mr. Hall of the Colonial Office and to Brigadier Cross at the War Office.

J. C. S. Beith

(J.C.S. Beith)
3rd May, 1948.

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

OUTWARD TELEGRAM

CI

FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

P. 172

75872/154/31

577[6] 1260 31

Code

TO PALESTINE (Gen. Sir A. Cunningham)

Sent 4th May, 1948. 16.45 hrs.

IMPORTANT

XBL

No. 1820 Restricted.

Telegram PR/71975 from C. in C., Middle East to the War Office dated 29th April states that after Cable and Wireless move to Trans-Jordan on 6th May no army apparatus will be available for the sole use of press messages, but that one SCR 399 wireless set will be at the disposal "of civil in Jerusalem for civil emergency" and that a similar set has been installed in the military compound at Haifa.

2. I understand that local correspondents are making arrangements to serve whatever transmitting facilities may be available to them and this seems to be a reasonable arrangement. Diplomatic wireless set to be used by the Consulate will not be available for press messages and I shall be glad if you will do your best in co-operation with the military authorities to assist correspondents to make arrangements for continued transmission of press messages. It is important that American correspondents should be allowed to share any facilities arranged for British correspondents and we understand that this is being done.

3. Please inform Beaumont for his guidance. I recognise that position will be extremely difficult but hope that a news black-out can be avoided.

Copies sent to:-

Foreign Office - Mr. J.G.S. Beith.
" " - News Division.

C B

73

INWARD TELEGRAM

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES

5776 1260 31.

Cypher (O.T.P. EXTRA)

FROM PALESTINE (Gen. Sir A. Cunningham)

D. 7th May, 1948.
R. 7th " " 16.45 hrs.

No. 1287 Confidential.

My telegram No. 1158.

Move of Cable and Wireless Ltd. from Jerusalem to Amman.

Representatives of the Foreign press in Jerusalem have severely criticised Fermiston-Evans, who is in charge of the Jerusalem unit, on the grounds that original scheme for the move to Amman, not later than 6th May, had been planned by himself owing to personal apprehensions, and without regard to continuity of communications available for the press.

2. As you know, original plan was framed on military considerations of the withdrawal. It had to be altered owing to subsequent developments of which you are also aware, and which, of course, had nothing to do with Fermiston-Evans.

3. Person named states, however, that the press complaints have reached the U.K. and have resulted in the displeasure of his directors and even the personal censure of the Mayor. I am concerned that he should not be blamed unjustly, and am taking steps to rectify matters here. I should be grateful, however, if you would make the position quite clear to his directors.

Copies sent to:-
Foreign Office - Communications Dept.